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Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Chair: Mr. Bugajski ..... (Poland)

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General debate on issues related to all aspects of the work of the Preparatory Committee (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

1. **The Chair**, on behalf of all the members of the Committee, expressed sympathy to the Government and the people of Canada in connection with the previous day's attack in Toronto.

General debate on issues related to all aspects of the work of the Preparatory Committee (*continued*)

2. **Ms. Heimerback** (Norway) said that the current session was taking place at a critical juncture: the nuclear and missile crisis relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remained unresolved; the joint comprehensive plan of action was under growing pressure; there were fundamentally opposing views on how to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons; core arms control treaties were under strain; there were prospects of a nuclear arms race; and the risk of nuclear terrorism was far from being eradicated.

3. Against that gloomy backdrop, it was vital to preserve and consolidate the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That would require genuine political will. Despite diverging perspectives, the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had enabled a constructive exchange of views on many difficult topics and had highlighted the Treaty's importance as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That constructive approach should be further pursued.

4. The legal obligations established by the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the outcomes of previous review conferences, notably, the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, should form the basis for the formulation of a forward-looking agenda on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That agenda should include reaffirmation of the Treaty's vitality; a recommitment to achieving a safer world without nuclear weapons; and the further building of trust and confidence through the exploration of all avenues for upholding and ensuring compliance with existing arms control agreements and preparation for further reductions in nuclear stockpiles, including the maintenance and extension of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty), the resolution of outstanding compliance matters in relation to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty), and the commencement of strategic talks.

5. Further efforts in the area of nuclear disarmament verification were also necessary. She therefore welcomed the commencement of work by the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. In addition, the early negotiation and conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (fissile material cut-off treaty) were more relevant than ever. Norway had consistently advocated the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and urged all Annex 2 States that had not yet signed and ratified that Treaty to do so.

6. Cognizance of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear explosions should inspire greater efforts to reduce the risks associated with nuclear arms. A world free of nuclear weapons could not be achieved without a credible and robust non-proliferation regime. In that respect, the universal implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and additional protocols to those agreements, the preservation of the joint comprehensive plan of action and a solution to the threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were essential.

7. It was vital to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region concerned. The establishment of such a zone on the Korean Peninsula would have a positive impact on the non-proliferation regime. Intensified nuclear security efforts were also an important part of the humanitarian approach, in which IAEA played a central role, and she urged all States parties to ratify the relevant protocols and treaties. In collaboration with IAEA, Norway would be hosting an international symposium in June 2018 on the minimization of highly enriched uranium in the civilian sector.

8. Norway was fully committed to the implementation of article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Civilian nuclear activities extended far beyond electricity generation, and peaceful nuclear applications in a range of sectors were crucial for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Norway encouraged all States in a position to do so to contribute to IAEA assistance programmes in those fields.

9. While it was not possible to disregard the fundamental differences among the States parties as to how best to achieve the elimination of all nuclear weapons, it should be possible to reach agreement on

many steps that could bring the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda forward. In the lead-up to 2020, it was important to focus on those steps. That would require readiness and political will. Norway stood ready to assist in those efforts.

10. **Ms. Werdaningtyas** (Indonesia) commended the Chair's initiative in organizing a series of regional dialogue and consultation sessions on the Non-Proliferation Treaty. As the host of the Asia-Pacific regional dialogue and consultations in 2017 and 2018, Indonesia continued to appreciate the benefit of that process and believed that that method of exchanging views should continue. It was ready to continue its engagement with a view to contributing to a successful 2020 Review Conference.

11. The Treaty's objectives could be achieved only through the balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory implementation of its three pillars. However, that balance remained elusive. In particular, insufficient progress had been made on disarmament. Nuclear-weapon States continued to rely on nuclear weapons in their military doctrines. In the current complex global security environment, the principle of nuclear deterrence should be abandoned as an obsolete relic of the Cold War. Persistent adherence to that principle had also impeded progress on non-proliferation.

12. Preferential treatment should be given to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty in respect of all activities to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

13. The loss of momentum at the 2015 Review Conference had hindered efforts to assess progress in the implementation of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and prevented improvements in transparency and confidence-building measures. The claim that more than 2,000 nuclear weapons had been retired and dismantled by the two largest possessors of nuclear weapons under their bilateral strategic agreement had yet to be verified transparently. Indonesia supported the discharge by IAEA of its safeguards and verification mandates and encouraged nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to continue to cooperate with the Agency.

14. The conclusion of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons represented a significant development in global efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. The Treaty complemented the Non-Proliferation Treaty and helped to allay grave concerns regarding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, as well as being an effective legal measure under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The treaties were mutually reinforcing.

15. Indonesia continued to call for the earliest possible entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and stressed the immense importance of its universal implementation. It therefore urged all States that had not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so without further delay.

16. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones represented a positive step towards attaining the objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation, and continued cooperation in that area should be encouraged. Efforts to convene the long-awaited conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction should be redoubled, as such a zone would significantly improve both regional and international peace and security.

17. At the 2020 Review Conference, the States parties could not afford another failure to reach agreement on a substantive outcome document. Indonesia was prepared to work collectively with all other States parties and civil society organizations to pursue the goal of balanced and universal implementation of the Treaty.

18. **Ms. Aitzhanova** (Kazakhstan) said that despite the challenges faced by the Non-Proliferation Treaty in recent years, it remained without a doubt the cornerstone of the international security architecture and the global non-proliferation regime.

19. The recent adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which Kazakhstan was in the process of ratifying, demonstrated the increased sense of responsibility and strong commitment of non-nuclear-weapon States. The Treaty sent a clear signal to all nuclear-weapon States, which must demonstrate goodwill by more proactively pursuing the elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

20. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation were very important to Kazakhstan and required the immediate attention of the global community. Accordingly, Kazakhstan had organized a special Security Council high-level thematic briefing on 18 January 2018, entitled "Non-proliferation of weapons of mass distribution: confidence-building measures". As the President of Kazakhstan had stated in his address to the Security Council, the success or failure of the process to modernize the global security system depended directly on the international community's ability to overcome militaristic anachronisms. Political trust and dialogue should be

re-established. The joint comprehensive plan of action might serve as a positive example in that regard, since it demonstrated the feasibility of multilateral diplomacy in the sphere of non-proliferation. A similar constructive approach could be employed in relation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In that respect, her country welcomed continued inter-Korean dialogue, which had already significantly reduced tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

21. Although a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing by the nuclear powers was an important factor in nuclear security, it could not substitute a legally binding document such as the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The prompt entry into force of that Treaty was essential for effective implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The decision made by the President of Kazakhstan in 1991 to close one of the world's largest and most active nuclear test sites, in Semipalatinsk in eastern Kazakhstan, had been the first legal act to ban nuclear tests.

22. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones remained one of the most effective measures for combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction. By establishing such a zone in Central Asia, Kazakhstan and its neighbours had delegitimized nuclear weapons in a vast region at the heart of the Eurasian continent. Four of the five permanent members of the Security Council had ratified the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia; the United States was also expected to do so soon.

23. Her country's decision to host the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank in its territory demonstrated its peaceful foreign policy and strong commitment to the implementation of international agreements. The establishment of the Bank would be another practical step towards guaranteed access to nuclear fuel for all States.

24. **Mr. Sadleir** (Australia), speaking on behalf of the Vienna Group of Ten, said that the current session represented an important opportunity to consider the progress that had been made and the opportunities that lay ahead to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty across its three equally important and mutually reinforcing pillars. The Group welcomed the Chair's commitment to ensuring that each of those pillars was given due and balanced consideration.

25. The Group convened prior to each Preparatory Committee session to consider ways to ensure that appropriate consideration was given to what had traditionally been referred to as the "Vienna issues": the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; compliance and verification; export controls; cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; nuclear safety; and nuclear security. Its work prior to the current session had culminated in a working paper (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.5) that provided a comprehensive, finely tuned and carefully negotiated — but accessible — series of recommendations relating to those issues and to the discouragement of withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Those recommendations reflected a carefully negotiated consensus among a diverse membership representing a range of experiences and perspectives on nuclear-related issues.

26. The strength of the Non-Proliferation Treaty lay in its almost universal implementation, which the Group was committed to protecting and further advancing. The Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was also vital to that regime, and had resulted in a moratorium on nuclear testing becoming a de facto international norm. The Group was committed to achieving the Treaty's entry into force, and therefore urged all States that had not yet signed or ratified it to do so without delay.

27. The Group recognized that safeguards played a critical role in maintaining confidence in the peaceful nature of nuclear activities and therefore encouraged the Preparatory Committee to affirm that comprehensive safeguards agreements accompanied by additional protocols constituted the current verification standard. It also urged States parties that had not yet concluded and implemented additional protocols to do so.

28. The Non-Proliferation Treaty played a central role in fostering international confidence in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which contributed significantly to the advancement of sectors such as human health, water management, agriculture, food safety and nutrition, energy and environmental protection, as well as to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, in order to harness the full benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, States must comply with safeguards and adhere to the highest standards of nuclear safety and security. It was also important to promote gender equality in activities relating to non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

29. Although the Treaty faced a number of challenges, progress had been and continued to be made. Examples included the work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group to identify and make recommendations on elements of a future treaty, the work of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification to develop credible measures and build global capacity for verifying nuclear disarmament and the establishment of the Group of

Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

30. **Mr. Jato** (Sweden) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was under great strain with regard to both disarmament and non-proliferation issues. Certain nuclear-weapon States had indicated their increased reliance on nuclear weapons, making the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons more elusive. Against that backdrop, concerns regarding the increased risk of the use of nuclear weapons were deeply felt both by Governments and by civil society. The 2020 Review Conference must therefore reaffirm their shared, strong commitment to the Treaty.

31. It was important to rebuild trust and understanding between States by identifying areas of common ground. That would require flexibility and universal acknowledgement that the three Treaty pillars were closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Progress would not be achieved unless the implementation of those pillars was balanced. Furthermore, all States must abstain from using the Treaty divisively in a manner that could undermine it.

32. Nuclear-weapon States should refrain from using the global security environment as a pretext for inaction. They must demonstrate a clear commitment to ensuring the success of the current review cycle, including by making progress on outstanding Treaty obligations and implementing in full the disarmament provisions of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference. Meanwhile, the engagement of non-nuclear-weapon States should be underpinned by recognition of the value of intermediate steps; they should not make perfect the enemy of good. Sweden intended to participate actively in such efforts.

33. Risk reduction, transparency measures and nuclear disarmament verification were areas in which it might be easiest to identify common ground. Given the increasing risk of the use of nuclear weapons, an effective risk-reduction agenda should be developed as a matter of urgency in the approach to the 2020 Review Conference.

34. The United States and the Russian Federation must continue negotiations to resolve serious concerns regarding the compliance of the latter country with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, without which Europe would be less secure. The two countries should also extend the New START Treaty or, preferably, seek further reductions in their strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed warheads.

35. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must abandon its nuclear weapon and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Sweden had insisted on combining a policy of pressure, including more effective implementation of sanctions, with a readiness to support diplomatic efforts. All parties were obliged to pursue a peaceful solution to the situation.

36. Sweden continued to firmly support the joint comprehensive plan of action, and expected all relevant parties to continue to implement the plan. Failure to do so would be detrimental to the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. As the IAEA had verified by applying its most stringent safeguards, the Islamic Republic of Iran continued to fulfil its nuclear obligations under the agreement. As long as that remained the case, the plan effectively curtailed that country's ability to develop nuclear weapons. While the country's role in the region and missile activities were clearly cause for concern, the latter being inconsistent with Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), the matter should be addressed separately and not at the expense of the plan. The plan also highlighted the crucial role of IAEA in upholding non-proliferation obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. All States that had not yet concluded additional protocols to their safeguards agreements with the Agency should do so without delay.

37. Although all parties to the Treaty were entitled to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, safety and security were key. Sweden could provide other countries with extensive cooperation and support in those areas.

38. He welcomed increasing awareness of the need for gender perspectives with regard to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. His delegation, together with the delegations of Australia, Canada and the Netherlands, would be hosting an informal meeting the following day to clarify the role of gender in the context of the Treaty.

39. In view of the upcoming anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, all States parties had an obligation to contribute to making the Review Conference a reaffirmation of the vitality of the Treaty framework. Efforts to achieve that goal should commence at the current session.

40. **Mr. Dhital** (Nepal) said it was regrettable that five decades after the adoption of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which constituted the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the basis for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, the international community's dream of a nuclear-weapon-free world remained unfulfilled. The review process should entail a holistic approach to the Treaty's three interlinked, mutually reinforcing pillars, and develop a robust regime that

ensured total safety and security in the use of nuclear technology for the benefit of humankind.

41. Underscoring the importance of renewed political will and flexibility by all States parties in achieving a successful conclusion to the 2020 Review Conference, he said that the level of progress achieved at the first session of the Preparatory Committee, held in 2017, should be examined and efforts redoubled. The failure of the 2015 Review Conference should not be allowed to cast a shadow over the Preparatory Committee's work.

42. He was heartened by the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which reaffirmed that any use of nuclear weapons would violate the principles of humanity and public conscience. The timely ratification of that landmark Treaty and its early entry into force would generate momentum conducive to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It was essential to move forward with the same spirit and commitment that had been demonstrated at the time of the Treaty's opening for signature. His country also supported the early conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

43. Nepal, as the host country of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for the Asia-Pacific, believed that nuclear-weapon-free zones could serve as building blocks for achieving complete disarmament at the global level. Effective implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference would be a significant step towards achieving peace and stability in the region and universal adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Nepal had consistently advocated the timely disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, negative security assurances should be provided to non-nuclear-weapon States by nuclear-weapon States.

44. Nepal firmly opposed the weaponization of outer space, which should be used for the betterment of the global community.

45. The peaceful use of nuclear technology in accordance with article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and in strict compliance with IAEA safeguards and verification measures, benefited all humankind. Accordingly, cooperation and knowledge-sharing with developing countries in the area of nuclear technology for scientific, humanitarian and development purposes must be enhanced to ensure equal benefits for all.

46. Nepal was gravely concerned that the risk of a nuclear weapon explosion was growing significantly as a result of increased proliferation, the lowering of the technical threshold for nuclear weapons capability and the danger of terrorist groups' gaining access to nuclear weapons and related materials. Peace, security and prosperity could not be ensured by the allocation of resources to the development of nuclear armaments or the modernization of nuclear weapons; rather, human and economic resources, including technological solutions, must be channelled into achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

47. In order to ensure the survival of humanity, nuclear weapons must never be used again, under any circumstances. Their proliferation seriously increased the risk of a nuclear war. Nuclear weapons could not serve any genuine security interests, as they only undermined security. Stockpiles of such weapons created not a sense of security but fear, mistrust and hostility. The establishment of further confidence-building measures and full compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty were therefore critical to ensuring collective security. In that respect, Nepal had jointly submitted a working paper (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.9) that highlighted the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons.

48. **Ms. Cleofe R. Natividad** (Philippines) expressed hope that at the current session, the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty would engage with one another positively to explore, develop and agree on practical outcomes. A successful 2020 Review Conference would reaffirm their collective commitment to the Treaty and reinforce its role in the global security architecture.

49. The challenges facing the global nuclear security environment should strengthen States parties' resolve to implement their obligations under the Treaty. The two countries with the largest nuclear arsenals bore primary responsibility for showing leadership and maintaining their commitment to disarmament.

50. The Philippines had voted for the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and had signed the Treaty on the day it had been declared open for signature. That Treaty highlighted the political will of a resounding majority of States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to establish a legal instrument in accordance with article VI of the Treaty and to strengthen the nuclear disarmament pillar. Her country considered the development and reinforcement of multilateral nuclear verification measures to be relevant to that pillar, and in that regard was paying close attention to the work of the Group of Governmental

Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

51. The Philippines attached great importance to the establishment of a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances; the negotiation of a treaty on fissile material that examined all stocks of such materials; the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone; adherence to IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols; ratification by more States of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material; the establishment of a nuclear fuel bank to ensure guaranteed access to nuclear fuel; and support for IAEA technical cooperation programmes. Her country was encouraged by recent decisions in the Conference on Disarmament to agree on a programme of work.

52. The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative papers on transparency, reporting and a strengthened review process outlined possible practical outcomes of the 2020 Review Conference. Renewed discussions on how to improve transparency and the efficiency of working methods were very useful in the context of efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

53. The Philippines appreciated the resolve of States parties, including regional groups and organizations, to sustain efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East despite challenging circumstances. As a State party to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, her country recognized that such zones reinforced the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime and contributed to more robust dialogue and cooperation among the zones.

54. Any attempt to undermine the joint comprehensive plan of action would seriously affect the 2020 Review Conference. The Philippines commended the efforts of IAEA, the permanent members of the Security Council and the Islamic Republic of Iran in implementing the plan, and hoped that that process would continue to serve as a model of how multilateralism could shape workable solutions.

55. The Philippines supported calls for increased gender balance in relation to disarmament processes and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and wished to see enhanced efforts in that area.

56. Her country's firm and principled commitment to the Treaty and the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons was anchored in the national Constitution. The review conferences provided States parties with an opportunity to reaffirm the enduring value of multilateralism in pursuing disarmament and security. Efforts should be made to achieve substantive and ambitious outcomes at the 2020 Review Conference, and balance with respect to all three Treaty pillars.

57. **Mr. Youssef** (Egypt) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty had played a significant role in preserving international peace and security, and its relevance was evidenced by the fact that most States had acceded to it. However, further efforts were needed to achieve its universal implementation and thus the attainment of its objectives.

58. The current review cycle was beset by challenges, including the reinterpretation by certain States parties of their disarmament-related obligations and commitments and the establishment of policies and doctrines contrary to the Treaty's letter and spirit. The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was testimony to the centrality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and represented the fulfilment by non-nuclear-weapon States of their obligation to pursue effective measures on nuclear disarmament, as the drafters of the Non-Proliferation Treaty had originally envisioned. The implementation of article VI of that Treaty was an obligation of all States parties and would make it possible to maintain a strong and effective non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

59. Although the three pillars of the Treaty were mutually reinforcing and were designed to be pursued simultaneously and in a balanced manner, there had been a growing focus on non-proliferation at the expense of the other two pillars, particularly nuclear disarmament. Egypt was gravely concerned by inadequate progress in that area. While limited measures had been taken both unilaterally and bilaterally, concerted multilateral efforts were lacking.

60. The upgrade of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new ones were crucial challenges that required the immediate attention of States parties. All aspects of non-proliferation must be achieved simultaneously through parallel efforts, in good faith, with the aim of achieving nuclear disarmament.

61. Cooperation on nuclear matters between States parties and non-States parties was contrary to the Treaty's provisions and agreed commitments, and would undermine all efforts aimed at achieving its universal implementation. Egypt therefore called on States parties currently engaged in or considering such cooperation to reconsider their policies and bring them into line with the Treaty's provisions and their existing commitments and obligations. It also called on all non-States parties to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear

weapon States without further delay, and to place their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

62. Not only had the 1995 resolution not been implemented, but efforts to pursue its implementation were being deliberately obstructed by certain States parties. The resolution had been adopted as part of a package that secured the indefinite extension of the Treaty. The nuclear-weapon States, particularly the co-sponsors of the resolution, should make the utmost effort to ensure its implementation.

63. It was regrettable that although the 1995, 2000 and 2010 review conferences had reaffirmed the importance of the accession of Israel to the Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, no progress had been achieved. During the current review cycle, States parties should agree on the measures required to ensure that Israel took those steps as soon as possible given that it remained the only Middle Eastern country that refused to accede to the Treaty yet operated nuclear facilities without a comprehensive safeguards agreement.

64. The inalienable right of States parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should be at the centre of each review cycle. States parties should promote international cooperation in the field of nuclear energy through the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technical knowledge. All States parties should actively endeavour to ensure the exercise of that right, in line with the Treaty's provisions, in order to maximize mutual benefits. Nuclear energy could significantly contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, subject to the provision of technical assistance and cooperation. Egypt endeavoured to exploit the full potential of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to achieve its development agenda.

65. **Mr. Molnar** (Hungary) said that over the past five decades, the Non-Proliferation Treaty had proved to be the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, multilateral nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The fact that the 2020 Review Conference would mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force was another reason to recommit to achieving the Treaty's objectives. The comprehensive action plan of the 2010 Review Conference provided States parties with a solid basis on which to do so. He called on the States parties to take a flexible approach in order to ensure a successful outcome of the current review cycle.

66. Hungary attached equal importance to the Treaty's three pillars and strove for their balanced implementation. With regard to disarmament, article VI of the Treaty continued to serve as the foundation for the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, that goal could not be achieved without taking into account the complex global security environment and the role of nuclear deterrence. Given the differing views on disarmament, progress could be achieved solely by focusing on areas of common ground, and that in turn would require an inclusive and progressive approach consisting of practical steps that involved the full engagement of nuclear-weapon States and promoted international security and stability. Those steps included the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and progress on disarmament verification, transparency and confidence-building measures. In that regard, Hungary valued the work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, and looked forward to contributing to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

67. In respect of non-proliferation, horizontal and vertical proliferation risks must be addressed effectively to preserve the Treaty's credibility. The role of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system was crucial in that regard.

68. The nuclear and ballistic missile programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea posed a grave threat to regional and international security, a situation which he hoped recent diplomatic efforts would help to defuse. Meanwhile, the joint comprehensive plan of action, which was fully aligned with the principles of the Treaty, was a positive example of how controversial issues could be resolved within the broader framework of the Treaty. Hungary therefore supported the plan's continued implementation by all relevant parties.

69. Hungary was in favour of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and supported efforts to initiate that process at a conference attended by all States of the region, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by those States.

70. As a country with an effective peaceful nuclear programme and plans to expand its capacities, Hungary recognized the inalienable right of all States parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. At the same time, it was committed to ensuring that all actors maintained and worked towards the highest possible safety and security standards. Accordingly, it supported the work of IAEA, which had a central role in that field.

Furthermore, Hungary actively participated in various initiatives and forums that played a supplementary but important role.

71. **Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) informed the Committee that the directors of the key foreign affairs agencies of the five permanent members of the Security Council had met that morning and had discussed almost all of the substantive issues before the Preparatory Committee during the current review cycle, including strategic stability. The group's dialogue would continue and the role of coordinator of the group would pass from the Russian Federation to China in May 2018.

72. The Russian Federation aligned itself fully with the key points of the statement made by the representative of China at the previous meeting.

73. The current international situation was complex. In various regions of the world, the threat of conflict was increasing, including the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. Collective cooperation mechanisms were being rejected and the authority of international organizations was being undermined. Traditional dialogue, respect for the positions and interests of others and understanding of the importance of seeking compromise were being replaced by a kind of belligerent radicalism that defied common sense and blighted any prospects for agreement. The Russian Federation regretted to note that many States were suddenly abandoning their traditional holistic and analytical approach and scrupulous assessment of both short- and long-term consequences. A number of Western countries had even claimed at the current session that the Russian Federation was failing to meet its international obligations. Such baseless and false allegations served only to increase tensions, fuel distrust among States and destabilize existing legal mechanisms.

74. In that context, sustained collective efforts were needed to ensure global security and stability, restore trust and reconcile the positions of various groups of States. A more stable international environment was possible only with the support of traditional mechanisms whose effectiveness and reliability had been proven over many years. The establishment of any new, politicized formats would only increase distrust and suspicion between States. In that respect, the basic principles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty provided a solid foundation for addressing the most complex issues in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament.

75. That fact was illustrated by the joint comprehensive plan of action, representing a unique combination of measures developed within the framework of the time-tested Security Council and IAEA mechanisms and through additional voluntary steps by the States parties to the agreement. As a result, the plan provided full confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran while ensuring its inalienable right to develop a civil nuclear programme. That country's comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol allowed IAEA to verify and confirm the absence of any undeclared nuclear materials or activities. Indeed, the Agency regularly confirmed the country's full compliance with its obligations.

76. However, the joint comprehensive plan of action was a fragile compromise. Any deviation from its general philosophy, breach of its provisions or attempt to reinterpret the text would inevitably undermine the global non-proliferation regime and damage regional and international stability and security. The Russian Federation therefore called for continued faithful and comprehensive implementation of the plan and of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) by all States parties to the agreement, in the interests of the entire global community. The Russian Federation would continue to comply with its commitments under the agreement as long as the other parties did so. He hoped that the joint statement in which the Russian Federation and China reiterated their support for the plan would find broad support among delegations.

77. The outcome of efforts to achieve a diplomatic solution to nuclear issues on the Korean Peninsula would to a large extent depend on the success of the joint comprehensive plan of action. Violation of the plan would hardly reassure the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that a potential future agreement would be observed. The Russian Federation was following with cautious optimism recent positive developments on the Korean Peninsula, including a number of high-level meetings with the participation of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the country's recent declarations that it would suspend nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests. While his country had never supported the ambitions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to acquire nuclear weapons and considered its non-compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions unacceptable, it was important to recognize that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was possible only through a comprehensive solution to all security issues in North-East Asia, including the growing problem of increasing United States missile defence capabilities. The Russian Federation and China had previously proposed a road map for achieving that goal. In the current circumstances, such a road map was needed more than ever before. His country would continue to provide comprehensive support to political

and diplomatic efforts to reach a negotiated solution to the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

78. The efforts of the international community in the area of nuclear disarmament should, at the present stage, focus on the establishment of conditions conducive to further steps in that area. It was vital to include all States with military nuclear capabilities in those efforts. In that regard, the Russian Federation was particularly concerned by the steady movement towards its borders of the nuclear bloc of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

79. The international community must take proactive steps to address the problems afflicting international security and stability, including the unrestricted development by the United States of a global missile defence system, the development of non-nuclear, high-precision strategic offensive weapons, the prospect of the placement of strike weapons in outer space — all those present were well aware which country was blocking the international community's efforts to prevent an arms race in space — and qualitative and quantitative imbalances with respect to conventional arms. The failure to address those issues undermined trust between States, destabilized disarmament architecture and created ever-growing impediments to non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

80. He wished to draw special attention to the decision of the United States to renounce its support for ratification of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and create conditions enabling the resumption of nuclear tests on its territory. It came as a surprise that that issue, despite being cause for great concern, was being studiously avoided by the Western States at the present session, as if it did not exist and the Test-Ban-Treaty was no longer of value to them. Such actions by the United States represented a serious blow to the validity of that Treaty and to nuclear non-proliferation efforts. If that country's example were followed by other States whose ratification of the Treaty was required for the instrument's entry into force, it would pave the way for an unchecked nuclear arms race.

81. The Russian Federation was firmly committed to the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and shared the concerns voiced by various States regarding its future. However, it appeared that many of the representatives present were unaware of the current reality. While the United States continued to make unsubstantiated allegations against the Russian Federation, it was the United States that had been violating the Treaty provisions for several years and was attempting to conceal its intention to destroy the Treaty by shifting responsibility onto the Russian Federation. It must not be forgotten that the very issue of non-proliferation had its origins in the nuclear bombing by the United States — the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons — of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and the realization by the United States at that time that it itself could one day become the victim of use of such weapons. Nonetheless, his country hoped that the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty could be saved and that the United States would demonstrate the necessary political will in that area. Discussions on the Treaty should be focused and should take place within the framework of the Treaty itself, rather than within the Preparatory Committee. He called on the United States delegation to refrain from making the issue more contentious, and expressed certainty that the United States and the Russian Federation could resolve all related issues.

82. While the Russian Federation supported the inviolability of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, implementation of that article could not be ensured independently of efforts to conclude a treaty on comprehensive disarmament under strict and effective international control.

83. No progress had been made in establishing a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. Further inaction in that area threatened to undermine States' confidence in the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The convening of a conference on the topic remained a relevant and achievable goal in the context of implementation of the 1995 resolution, and there should be no further procrastination. Relevant proposals presented by the Russian Federation at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference on structuring preparatory work for such a conference could serve as a foundation for the adoption of a decision at that Conference to convene a conference on the establishment of such a zone.

84. **Mr. Vierita** (Romania) said that his country remained firmly committed to maintaining the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the key multilateral instrument for strengthening international peace, security and stability, to promoting its universality and to enhancing its implementation. On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, Romania encouraged all States parties to adopt a progressive approach by minimizing differences of opinion and seeking compromise to advance their shared goal of strengthening all three Treaty pillars. The main objectives of the current review process were to identify areas for further progress and the means of achieving that progress, strengthen implementation of the Treaty and achieve its universal implementation by

reaffirming the validity and importance of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference.

85. Romania was committed to achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons in an effective, verifiable and irreversible manner through pragmatic measures that could ensure real and sustainable progress on nuclear disarmament. Tangible results in that area required strengthened cooperation with nuclear-weapon States and careful consideration of the international security environment. Measures to achieve those objectives included the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the commencement, within the Conference on Disarmament, of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which would be a crucial instrument in advancing disarmament. Disarmament efforts should focus on the improvement of geopolitical conditions through the development of confidence- and transparency-building measures.

86. He welcomed the progress made by nuclear-weapon States in implementing article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the achievement of the central limits of the New START Treaty. It was also important to preserve the viability of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which was an essential instrument for international security and stability.

87. The development of nuclear and ballistic programmes, which threatened international peace and security and the global non-proliferation regime in complete disregard of Security Council resolutions and international obligations, was of serious concern. In that context, he welcomed ongoing diplomatic efforts to reach a peaceful solution, including the upcoming high-level talks on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, while underlining the need for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to demonstrate genuine political will to achieve complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization and to address the international community's concerns.

88. Romania welcomed the monitoring by IAEA of the joint comprehensive plan of action through a robust technical mechanism. Continued full and rigorous implementation of the plan, in keeping with the letter and spirit of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), would foster regional and international security and build trust among partie .

89. The 1995 resolution remained valid. However, progress in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region required dialogue and increased confidence among relevant parties on the basis of arrangements freely agreed upon by them. Romania strongly condemned any use of weapons of mass destruction, for which there could be no justification and which must be addressed resolutely by the international community.

90. Universal implementation of IAEA additional protocols, which were the de facto standard for verifying safeguards obligations, would significantly enhance the international security environment and strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Romania reaffirmed its support for IAEA and its work to monitor compliance with nuclear safeguards worldwide, and the need to ensure that the Agency had both the resources and authority to fulfil its mandate.

91. The international community must focus its attention on preventing, detecting and responding adequately to acts of nuclear terrorism. In that respect, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which helped countries to increase their counter-terrorism capabilities, was of unique value as part of the global nuclear security architecture.

92. The promotion and implementation of the highest safety, security and non-proliferation standards by all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty was crucial to ensure the safe use of nuclear energy. Over the years, his country had demonstrated a strong commitment to nuclear safety by significantly strengthening its regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety, making important progress in the management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, as certified by IAEA experts in 2017.

93. In order to advance the Treaty and strengthen the global non-proliferation regime, it was the collective responsibility of States parties to display a constructive and balanced approach in addressing current challenges. Bridging political differences was in the interest of the Treaty and the entire international community.

94. **Mr. Gaffey** (Ireland) said that in 1958, when Ireland had introduced the first United Nations resolutions that would eventually lead to adoption of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the prospect of a world in which many actors would acquire the means to build their own nuclear arsenals had been very real. As the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force approached, many of its objectives had been achieved. Very few States had remained outside the Treaty and gone on to develop nuclear weapons. The five nuclear-weapon States had become States parties and were bound by the commitment to nuclear disarmament under article VI; a commitment that had been strengthened in 2000 by their undertaking to eliminate their nuclear weapons. Many States had chosen to be part of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Furthermore, in 2017, almost two-thirds of United Nations Member States had voted to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The significance of that Treaty lay in its ground-breaking content and the progress it represented towards the fulfilment of the Non-Proliferation Treaty's disarmament provisions.

95. The international community had built a strong framework of supporting institutions around the Non-Proliferation Treaty. IAEA, in particular, had built up an impressive expertise structure and an enabling framework for the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Meanwhile, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization had strengthened the norm against nuclear testing.

96. Through the development of export control regimes, including the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime, States had been assisted in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology without preventing the transfer of technology and materials for peaceful uses.

97. The Non-Proliferation Treaty had helped to promote many far-reaching agreements aimed at preventing further proliferation and facilitating bilateral nuclear disarmament, including the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms and the New START Treaty.

98. However, despite those achievements, the joint comprehensive plan of action, which had been negotiated with great care, was under threat. Meanwhile, disarmament efforts had stalled. In spite of the successful outcome of the 2010 Review Conference, consensus had not been reached at the 2015 Review Conference. The Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had not entered into force and nuclear testing by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had undermined the global norm against such testing. Moreover, efforts to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in military doctrines and in nuclear alliances had faltered, and the use of nuclear weapons other than as deterrents appeared to be under consideration. It was therefore vital for States parties to renew their efforts to overcome divisions regarding nuclear disarmament.

99. In the context of increased international tensions and the heightened risk of detonation of a nuclear weapon with catastrophic humanitarian consequences, Ireland urged the nuclear-weapon States to work on risk reduction measures, such as de-alerting their nuclear weapons, as a matter of urgency, and encouraged the United States and the Russian Federation to re-engage on a successor agreement to the New START Treaty. Furthermore, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East should be addressed urgently. It was time to reassess how progress could be made and trust built through dialogue.

100. The Chair's factual summary of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference gave grounds for hope, including recognition of the need to increase women's participation in nuclear disarmament forums. Ireland was preparing to present a working paper that discussed the role of gender in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and that was part of a research project entitled "Nuclear Disarmament, the Missing Link in Multilateralism", which aimed to more effectively connect nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to the international community's other major goals, notably within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

101. A nuclear-weapon-free world was still possible, but the attainment of that goal required leadership, courage and hard work. It was the shared obligation of the States parties to demonstrate those values at the current session.

102. **Mr. Alghunaim** (Kuwait) reaffirmed his country's commitment to preserving international peace and security and supporting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation through respect for, and the promotion and preservation of, international agreements. That commitment was reflected by its membership of the Security Council.

103. The most effective way to eliminate the risks posed by nuclear weapons and ensure non-proliferation was through the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay. Since the international community agreed that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, it was important to reaffirm its credibility, particularly in light of developments on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of its entry into force. All States bore responsibility for that task and must work together to ensure a successful 2020 Review Conference.

104. While all States parties were aware of the progress achieved under the Treaty, including the reduction in nuclear arsenals and the transfer of knowledge regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, they should not overlook current challenges, including the conduct of nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the declaration by certain countries that they intended to develop and modernize their nuclear arsenals and make nuclear deterrence an integral part of their military doctrines, and the failure to address the nuclear programme of Israel. At the current session, participants should discuss those developments and

identify mechanisms to address them within the framework of the Treaty.

105. Kuwait strongly condemned all acts that undermined security, including the nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, that country's recent decision to cease its nuclear tests should be regarded as a positive step that would build confidence and diffuse tensions.

106. He reaffirmed the importance of universal implementation of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which complemented the disarmament regime, and its prompt entry into force through ratification by all remaining countries.

107. The possession and acquisition of nuclear weapons led only to further instability; only their total elimination would protect humanity. Kuwait therefore called on nuclear-weapon States to abandon their nuclear-weapon-based defence strategies and stop developing their nuclear arsenals. Meanwhile, the fulfilment by non-nuclear-weapon States of their commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty was essential and demonstrated their understanding of the seriousness of the possession and use of nuclear weapons.

108. Universal implementation of the Treaty could be achieved only if Israel acceded to it, especially since Israel was the only Middle Eastern country that had not yet done so. Israel was also impeding the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The 1995 resolution must be enforced. That was the responsibility of all States parties, particularly the three depositary States and the other nuclear-weapon States. The outcomes of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 review conferences must also be implemented.

109. The right of all countries to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in line with international and IAEA agreements must not be reinterpreted. In that context, his country commended the work of IAEA and highlighted the importance of its technical cooperation programmes in transferring knowledge and helping developing countries to build their capacities. Kuwait had supported various IAEA activities in that area, including through its significant funding of efforts to establish a low-enriched uranium bank in Kazakhstan.

110. The universality of IAEA comprehensive safeguards and voluntary accession to additional protocols were important aspects of the non-proliferation regime. In that connection, Kuwait welcomed the conclusion by the State of Palestine of a comprehensive safeguards agreement.

111. **Mr. Aguiar Patriota** (Brazil) said that the already delicate task of preparing for the 2020 Review Conference was further complicated by the circumstances under which the Preparatory Committee was meeting.

112. However, there had been recent glimmers of hope, including the adoption and opening for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was the most important development in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in over two decades, as recognized by the awarding of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. As the first country to sign that Treaty, Brazil was convinced of its consistency with the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and of the treaties' complementarity. Other positive progress included reductions in nuclear arsenals under the New START Treaty and resumed dialogue on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. However, there had also been a deterioration in international security and relations between nuclear-weapon States, accompanied by troubling signs of a new, profoundly misguided reliance on nuclear weapons and related deterrence doctrines.

113. Warnings against the modernization of nuclear weapons consistently issued by his and other countries had proven prophetic. There was widespread concern that a new arms race was already under way, and nuclear-weapon States were openly developing nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Those developments directly contradicted the commitments made under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, raised doubts regarding the intention of those countries to pursue the implementation of article VI and undermined the Treaty and its three pillars.

114. The new arms race appeared to be based on the untested and potentially disastrous convergence of new technologies with the traditional concept of nuclear deterrence. The blurring of lines between conventional and nuclear, tactical and strategic and kinetic and non-kinetic means of attack, particularly the use of cybertools, challenged conventional wisdom on nuclear weapons and introduced uncertainty into an area where there was no margin for error. The heightened rhetoric accompanying that trend, coupled with political brinkmanship and strategic recklessness, added to his country's concerns.

115. The Treaty had had some success in preventing proliferation, and had made it possible to overcome several challenges. However, Brazil was particularly concerned by signs that the commitments made under the joint comprehensive plan of action were not being honoured. The unravelling of that plan, which had been

approved by the Security Council and its implementation consistently certified by IAEA, would create doubt regarding the multilateral system's credibility and effectiveness. Furthermore, the accession to the Nuclear Suppliers Group of non-States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty might undermine the integrity of the Treaty regime if no criteria for such accession were agreed on and if a case-by-case approach was not taken. Such a haphazard attitude to such critical issues would bode ill for the non-proliferation regime, as it defied the fundamental concept of a rules-based system.

116. It was against that backdrop that States parties must intensify their efforts to protect and maintain the Non-Proliferation Treaty through full compliance with its obligations. In that respect, Brazil and Argentina had built a unique relationship of cooperation and mutual trust, underpinned by the work of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials. States parties must also reaffirm the commitments unanimously agreed at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 review conferences, and respond to current challenges with renewed energy and focus. The Non-Proliferation Treaty regime was a fundamental component of the global peace and security architecture, and it was the collective responsibility of the States parties to reaffirm and build on to ensure a successful 2020 Review Conference and the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

117. **Mr. Sadleir** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of the group of States comprising Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey, said that the fiftieth anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty obliged States parties to be forward-looking and focus on their common interest in supporting and strengthening the Treaty. They must minimize differences and reach compromise to advance the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. That goal should be pursued through a progressive approach involving pragmatic and effective steps to safely eliminate nuclear weapons. Prospects for progress should be considered in light of the international security environment and without losing sight of broader concerns regarding the risks posed by nuclear weapons. Indeed, the Non-Proliferation Treaty had always sought to balance ambitious goals with geopolitical realities.

118. One such reality was the threat posed to the international community and the non-proliferation regime by the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Moreover, there were diverging views on how best to advance multilateral nuclear disarmament. Those differences must not hinder efforts to collaborate in areas of common ground across all three pillars of the Treaty.

119. Progress on nuclear disarmament was impossible without the direct involvement of nuclear-weapon States, which had special responsibilities in that area. Their participation in ways that built the trust required to achieve further reductions in their arsenals was essential, but was possible only through the constructive and sustained engagement of all States parties.

120. As the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, the Non-Proliferation Treaty provided the foundation for States to work together to achieve common objectives. States parties should use the current session to reaffirm its goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons through effective and inclusive measures.

121. **Mr. Podhorsky** (Slovakia) said that the fiftieth anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty provided States parties with a good opportunity to reaffirm the centrality and integrity of the Treaty as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the further development of applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

122. Slovakia was committed to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, which should be achieved through a pragmatic and progressive approach that took into account the prevailing security environment and focused on implementing the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and the thirteen steps. The urgent revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament was also essential to achieve treaty-based disarmament and arms control. His country continued to support the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

123. The entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was another crucial step in advancing disarmament and non-proliferation. Accordingly, Slovakia called on all States that had not ratified that Treaty to do so without further delay. Slovakia had been actively contributing to capacity-building efforts in support of the Treaty since 2001, mainly by hosting various training and on-site inspection activities, and stood ready to extend its cooperation activities.

124. Slovakia condemned the continued conduct by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of nuclear and

ballistic missile tests, which represented a grave threat to international security and a flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. While there had been recent encouraging developments in that area, the international community must maintain maximum pressure on that country until it embarked on a credible path towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. Meanwhile, Slovakia welcomed the progress achieved to date under the joint comprehensive plan of action, and supported the plan's continued full and effective implementation.

125. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy remained a key priority of, and was of strategic importance to, his country. Nuclear energy continued to occupy a stable position in the national energy mix and was a main pillar of the national energy policy. It increased the security of the country's energy supply and enabled the affordable generation of sufficient, environmentally-friendly energy. Two new units were under construction at the Mochovce site and a new nuclear facility was planned at the Jaslovske Bohunice site.

126. Nuclear safety was a prerequisite for the use of nuclear energy. Slovakia supported IAEA efforts to globalize nuclear safety by integrating safety-related activities, assisting member States in the implementation of IAEA safety standards and promoting adherence to the relevant international conventions. It also supported the IAEA technical cooperation programme and the Agency's role in further developing the peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

127. **Ms. Rodriguez Ramirez** (Panama) said that since the 2020 Review Conference would be the first held since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the States parties should commit to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies in line with Goal 16. In that context, her country was firmly committed to promoting peace and security, and supported all multilateral initiatives aimed at disarmament and non-proliferation.

128. Panama attached the utmost importance to the decisions made at Non-Proliferation Treaty review conferences. In that spirit, it had jointly submitted a working paper (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.9) on the humanitarian consequences of use of nuclear weapons.

129. Although seven decades had passed since the adoption of the first General Assembly resolution on nuclear disarmament, work remained to be done, especially given the prevailing complex international environment characterized by tensions and great uncertainty. The persistence of States that defended unjustifiable stances by assigning a higher value to national security than to the survival of humanity was precisely what had led to the current dire situation.

130. She noted with serious concern that certain States were forging ahead with programmes to broaden, modernize and hone their nuclear weapons, delivery systems and related materials and technologies, as well as giving a prominent position to those devices in their defence and security doctrines and deterrence policies. Such practices would only lead to a new arms race, which would undermine the Treaty's principles and objectives. Furthermore, the risk of those weapons' falling into terrorist hands and their vulnerability to cyberattacks were alarming.

131. While the strategic considerations and national security of some States must be acknowledged, nuclear weapons would undeniably cause catastrophic damage to human health, the environment, food security and socioeconomic development. Moreover, ionizing radiation had a disproportionate effect on women and girls. The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons also violated the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Furthermore, their use would constitute a crime against humanity. They should never be used again.

132. Panama urged all States that were not parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to accede to it unconditionally and without delay, and to place their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. It also underscored the importance of the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and encouraged States that had not yet ratified that Treaty to do so.

133. The only effective safeguard against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was their transparent, irreversible and verifiable elimination within a multilaterally agreed time frame. She therefore welcomed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which provided a historic opportunity for nuclear disarmament and full compliance with article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, she called for the negotiation of a legally binding universal instrument on negative security assurances, and also called on all parties to convene an international conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as agreed in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference. Lastly, she underscored the inalienable right of States parties to access the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with article IV of the Treaty.

134. **Mr. Kono** (Japan) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty had enabled the international community to overcome several crises and prevented the use of

nuclear weapons in war since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nuclear stockpiles had been reduced by 85 per cent since the Cold War and nuclear proliferation has been limited to a greater extent than anticipated. For example, South Africa had abandoned its nuclear development programme and acceded to the Treaty.

135. As the only country that had experienced nuclear devastation during war, Japan knew how catastrophic the consequences were and therefore considered itself responsible for leading international efforts to achieve the shared goal of a safer world free of nuclear weapons. Since the Treaty offered the most universal framework for achieving a balance between the addressing of security threats and avoidance of the devastating humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, its maintenance and reinforcement would form the basis of his country's efforts in that regard. Concrete and practical measures must also be established with the cooperation of both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

136. His country had submitted a working paper (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.37) containing a series of recommendations formulated by the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament. The recommendations, which were intended to provide a meaningful reference for the international community, stressed the need for civility in discourse and respect for divergent views, and for States parties to demonstrate their "ownership" of the Treaty. The recommendations also proposed concrete measures for a rapprochement between States with different approaches, and highlighted several issues that must be resolved to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The aim was to reconcile different views through open and active discussions among experts from nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

137. Japan called on the international community to engage in concrete actions on the basis of the three bridge-building measures proposed in the recommendations. Firstly, States should make efforts to increase transparency, which would improve communication, build confidence and decrease distrust and misunderstandings, thereby reducing risk and contributing to a stronger review process. Secondly, States should establish an effective mechanism for nuclear disarmament verification, which was essential in order to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons, including the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The process of developing such a mechanism would also build confidence among members of the international community. Japan regarded that task as urgent, and would actively contribute to the discussions of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament in May 2018. Thirdly, there should be interactive discussions between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States on such topics as how to contribute effectively to threat reduction and how to address security concerns emerging from the nuclear disarmament process.

138. All States parties to the Treaty shared responsibility for building momentum in the approach to the 2020 Review Conference. Japan and other members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative would lead those efforts. Japan would also continue to promote the early entry into force and universalization of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and called for increased participation in the International Monitoring System and for the prompt commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. It would contribute to discussions regarding the substantive components of such a treaty within the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group.

139. Japan placed great emphasis on conveying to the world the reality of atomic bombings, and commended the hibakusha — the survivors of the atomic explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki — for their tireless efforts in that respect. It intended to invite world leaders and younger generations to visit those cities, and would promote disarmament education and capacity-building.

140. The nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea posed a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. That country's move towards dialogue was the result of the international community's coordinated efforts to apply the maximum pressure. While Japan welcomed the announcement by the country that it would discontinue nuclear testing and dismantle its test site, which it hoped would result in the dismantling of the country's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, further steps were needed and pressure must continue to be applied. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must heed the calls of the international community for its signature and ratification of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

141. The joint comprehensive plan of action contributed to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime and its continued full implementation was important. He hoped that the issue of ballistic missile testing by the Islamic Republic of

Iran would be solved through discussions between the relevant countries.

142. Japan supported IAEA efforts to enhance and streamline its safeguards system, which was an essential tool in efforts to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. As the most practical and effective way to enhance that system, comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols must be universally implemented.

143. The shared commitment by nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to achieving the goals of the Non-Proliferation Treaty would be a meaningful starting point for building bridges towards nuclear disarmament. He hoped that all States parties and civil society would work together so that future generations recalled the 2020 Review Conference as the point at which sufficient momentum had been created to overcome different approaches and at which a significant step had been taken towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

144. **Mr. Grossi** (Argentina) said that the 2020 Review Conference was an opportunity to reaffirm States parties' commitment to the necessary balance of rights and obligations that were still relevant half a century after the Non-Proliferation Treaty's entry into force.

145. The Treaty's three pillars had evolved over the years to reflect the legal and political framework that underpinned the policies of both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. The current international context necessitated analysis of the best way to keep that framework up to date in order to achieve the goal of a robust regime that discouraged countries from considering the acquisition of nuclear weapons and that ensured the verifiable, transparent and irreversible destruction of existing weapons.

146. The current situation posed significant challenges and highlighted not only the Treaty's importance and relevance but also States parties' continued responsibility for preventing the escalation of conflict leading to the use of nuclear weapons. The re-emergence of the use of weapons of mass destruction was lamentable. The issues on the Treaty agenda concerned not only specialists and diplomats but all humanity, having a direct impact on international peace, security and stability.

147. Argentina welcomed recent declarations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it had decided to halt nuclear and missile tests. He hoped that the upcoming summit meeting between that country and the United States, as well as the inter-Korean summit, would consolidate that progress and pave the way for more ambitious and verifiable agreements. In particular, the signature and ratification by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the return to the country of IAEA inspectors would be positive signs.

148. While many States might feel frustrated by the failure to implement various Treaty goals, it was important to recognize that the world would be a considerably darker place without it. Confidence in the relevance and permanence of the Treaty counterbalanced the urgent concerns raised by the international security situation.

149. The 2020 Review Conference provided an opportunity to recommit to the Treaty. That was particularly important in view of the failure of the States parties to reach consensus at the 2015 Review Conference. States parties must focus their efforts in order to prevent the review process being held hostage to political issues that, while important, must not distract them from fulfilling the Conference's mandate, or from the positive overall picture, to which a number of developments had contributed. For example, following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, States had taken a series of actions that had resulted in substantive improvements in the area of nuclear safety. Likewise, efforts in the field of security had improved drastically through high-level initiatives, including a series of presidential summits and other multinational undertakings that would have seemed unimaginable only a few years earlier. There had been significant development in the area of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, supported by the IAEA safeguards system, which had also undergone considerable modernization and was of particular interest to developing countries. All those aspects deserved systematic and considered review.

150. Although the Non-Proliferation Treaty had made a substantial contribution to international security, work remained to be done. Guidance on how to achieve further progress could be found in the articles of the Treaty itself. The international community was entitled to demand greater progress and political commitment. The current session was an opportunity to improve the preparatory process and lay the foundations for a successful 2020 Review Conference.

151. **Mr. Lapsley** (United Kingdom) said that thanks to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the number of nuclear-weapon States had remained a single digit, proliferation had been curbed, and a comprehensive safeguards system had been established. The contribution to development made by the peaceful uses of nuclear

energy also served to highlight the benefits derived from the Treaty.

152. The Treaty represented the overall arms control and non-proliferation architecture. The decision by certain States to challenge the collective body of rules, norms and standards that the international community had painstakingly constructed was concerning and undermined the security and prosperity of all.

153. In the past year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had violated a series of Security Council resolutions, testing its largest ever nuclear explosive device and its longest-range ballistic missile. He hoped that the planned talks between the leaders of that country, South Korea and the United States would demonstrate that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea understood that only a change of course could result in the security and prosperity it allegedly sought.

154. As the development by the Russian Federation of new missile systems raised serious questions about its compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, he urged that country to engage in constructive dialogue through the mechanisms provided for by the Treaty to address the international community's concerns.

155. Most recently and shockingly, chemical weapons had been used in Douma by the regime of President Assad and in Salisbury, United Kingdom, by the Russian Federation, in violation of treaty obligations and norms. It was both appropriate and necessary to mention those issues in the current forum because they raised questions regarding the credibility of the non-proliferation architecture, the multilateral system and the trust that underpinned it, and were relevant to other issues that were to be addressed at the current session.

156. Some States upheld the international arms control framework and some did not. Those present must all fulfil their responsibility to protect and implement agreed arms control rules to ensure their effectiveness, and hold those who breached such rules to account. The United Kingdom was a responsible nuclear-weapon State that remained committed to pursuing all three, mutually reinforcing Treaty pillars.

157. The establishment of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, which was the result of the strengthened review process adopted in 1995, had been an unprecedented step. His country supported the full implementation of its recommendations and called on all States parties to continue working to that end. It was clear what they could achieve by working together, building trust and confidence among States.

158. The United Kingdom remained committed to article VI of the Treaty. It had a strong record on arms reductions, having cut the number of warheads on each deployed ballistic submarine, the number of operational missiles on each of those submarines, and the number of operationally available warheads. The most effective way to achieve multilateral disarmament was through a negotiated, step-by-step approach within existing frameworks. Progress was possible, as demonstrated by ongoing collective efforts on disarmament verification.

159. His country would continue to promote the universal implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, press for the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and call for the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. However, the United Kingdom neither had nor would become party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and did not recognize it as representing an emerging rule of customary international law.

160. Since the implementation of the joint comprehensive plan of action, the United Kingdom had worked to ensure its success and expected all parties to continue to fully implement the deal. His country also called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to refrain from conducting ballistic missile launches in violation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), and from engaging in activities that destabilized the region.

161. The United Kingdom reaffirmed its commitment to the 1995 resolution, and to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and was prepared to support and facilitate renewed dialogue in that respect.

162. As global demand for reliable and sustainable energy grew, nuclear technology could play an increasing role in improving many people's lives. His country would therefore remain committed to the Treaty's pillar on nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

163. It was vital to keep in mind the far-sightedness embodied by the Treaty. States parties must continue to take steps towards achieving their long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons, prevent proliferation and uphold the right to develop civil nuclear technology. That depended on their coming together, even under difficult circumstances, to reaffirm their support for their shared norms and standards and hold to account those who threatened their security and prosperity.

164. **Ms. Korka** (Greece) said that the States parties must strive to preserve and strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. To that end, they must uphold the principle of

undiminished security for all in the context of the increasingly complex and challenging global security environment, and to give new impetus to both non-proliferation and progressive disarmament on the basis of a prudent and realistic approach. It was also essential to accelerate efforts to conclude a fissile material cut-off treaty and establish a nuclear disarmament verification framework.

165. The holistic approach that was needed to fulfil those objectives required dialogue among nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States with a view to significant reductions in nuclear arsenals, ultimately leading to complete nuclear disarmament. She therefore hoped that deliberations at the current session would serve to bridge divides and contribute to building a safer world.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.